

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 067623
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:JPLYLE:LB

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

H:RFLATPN

S/S-ORPERITO

L/NEA:DSMALL

OSD/ISA/FMRA:TPKEENAN

OSD/ISA/NESA:DGWILSON

PM/ISO:GCHURCHILL

-----260428Z 120406 /72-61

O 260343Z MAR 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE

INFO SECDEF IMMEDIATE

JCS IMMEDIATE

CNO IMMEDIATE

CINCEUR IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

COMIDEASTFOR IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

CINCPACFLT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 067623

EXDIS -- MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG, BA

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST FORCE

REFERENCE: MANAMA 676

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1. WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY APPARENTLY FORTHCOMING GOB ATTITUDE TOWARD POSSIBLE NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTINUED MIDDLE

EAST FORCE PRESENCE IN AREA. WE WILL AWAIT YOUR REPORT OF

THE OUTCOME OF THE PROMISED 27 MARCH GOB CABINET MEETING BEFORE SEEKING CIRCULAR 175 AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE A NEW

ARRANGEMENT. WE WILL EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF EXCHANGE OF NOTES PER PARA 3(C) REFTEL, BUT CANNOT PROVIDE BAHRAINIS WITH AUTHORITATIVE ANSWER ON THIS POINT UNTIL CIRCULAR 175 PROCEDURE COMPLETED, AND YOU ARE EMPOWERED TO COMMENCE FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOB. WE WILL BE ANSWERING OTHER QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL ASAP.

2. WITH SPECIFIC REGARD TO OUR PUBLIC POSTURE ON THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS, WE AGREE WITH GOB ON IMPORTANCE OF CAREFUL HANDLING OF ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND WILL WISH TO WORK OUT AGREED LANGUAGE WITH BAHRAINIS. FOR THE MOMENT WE ARE USING FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE, WHICH IS LANGUAGE AGREED WITH GOB IN FALL OF 1975: QUOTE: THE 1971

STATIONING AGREEMENT PROVIDES THAT EITHER PARTY MAY TERMINATE THE AGREEMENT. THE BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD THE UNITED STATES THAT IT WOULD LIKE TO PHASE OUT THE U.S. NAVY'S MIDDLE EAST FORCE DURING 1977. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT ON THIS MATTER IN THE SPIRIT OF THE CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WHICH HAVE EXISTED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES OVER MANY YEARS. END QUOTE.

3. WE, OF COURSE, INTEND TO CONSULT IN APPROPRIATE FASHION WITH THE CONGRESS ON THE FUTURE STATUS OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE AND WILL BE EXAMINING ON PRIORITY BASIS PRECISELY WHAT FORM SUCH CONSULTATION SHOULD TAKE AS DETAILS OF NEW ARRANGEMENTS EVOLVE. FYI: WE WOULD, AT A MINIMUM, PROVIDE THE CONGRESS WITH COPIES OF DOCUMENTS
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DETAILING THE ARRANGEMENTS TO COMPLY WITH THE CASE ACT, AND IT HAS BEEN NORMAL PRACTICE TO HAVE PRIOR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEES AS WELL. ADDITIONALLY, IF YOUR DISCUSSIONS LEAD TO A LEASE ARRANGEMENT CALLING FOR AN ANNUAL RENTAL IN EXCESS OF DOLS 250,000, WE ARE STATUTORILY REQUIRED TO PROVIDE PRIOR NOTIFICATION TO THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEES, GIVING THOSE COMMITTEES A FORMAL OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT.
END FYI.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NAVAL FORCES, MILITARY BASES, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE067623
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JPLYLE:LB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770104-0037
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770318/aaaaapnq.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cafa39b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 MANAMA 676
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2984904
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MIDDLE EAST FORCE
TAGS: MORG, MARR, BA, US
To: MANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cafa39b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009